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Janelia Farm to Expand Campus Housing; Ashburn Firm to Manage Project



Image Title: A rendering of the planned housing facilities at Janelia Farm. Ashburn, Virginia-based Dietze Construction Group and WDG Architecture of Washington, D.C., have been selected to design and build the project. - Courtesy of WDG Architecture

The Janelia Farm Research Campus of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute today announced plans to move forward with development of additional housing on the Ashburn campus to support the recruitment of graduate students, postdoctoral researchers, and other scientists at the beginning of their careers.

Ashburn-based Dietze Construction Group and WDG Architecture of Washington, D.C., have been selected to design and build the project. Dietze

expects to break ground in late August or early September following completion of preliminary site work. The total project cost, including the cost of financing, is estimated at \$23 million.

"Attracting the best and brightest graduate scientists to HHMI and Loudoun County requires making them feel welcome and at home in our community. Expanding housing for scientists will help us in that goal," said Supervisor Lori L. Waters, whose Broad Run District encompasses the Janelia Farm campus.

The 60 one-bedroom apartments will be located in an 80,000-square-foot building on a portion of the campus that lies just southeast of the research building, near the main entrance to Janelia Farm. The four-story building will have a slightly curved design that echoes the shape of the nearby research building; it will include one floor of covered parking and three floors of apartments.

"Graduate students and post docs are with us for a relatively short period of time and they place a high value on living close to their laboratories. As a result, expansion of on-campus housing is an important element in recruiting the most talented candidates from around the world and building a vibrant research community," said Gerry Rubin, Janelia Farm's director. "We couldn't be more pleased to have a local partner on this important project."

The concept for the apartment complex is a three story residential structure, placed over an elevated podium that contains parking and common areas. Each typical residential floor contains 20 apartments – eight one-bedroom units and 12 with one-bedroom and an added den. The complex includes 61 covered parking spaces dedicated to residents. Additional visitor and handicap parking spaces are located nearby.

The exterior façade is divided into two distinct design elements that correspond to the two major massing forms: the central framework or "spine" and the alternating projecting residential bays or "pods." The individual residential units incorporate a wide and long design to maximize the opportunity to infuse natural light into the interior spaces. The horizontal layout allows for living spaces to be aligned in a loft-like configuration along the exterior wall while core functions including storage, bath and kitchens, are aligned along the interior corridor wall.

“We are honored to be working with such a prestigious client as HHMI. And together with WDG Architecture, we look forward to showcasing our multi-family construction experience within Loudoun County and the HHMI campus,” said Jim Dougherty, Senior Vice President of Construction at the Dietze Construction Group.

The apartments will augment the housing village developed as part of the original campus plan. Those units – a mix of 21 studios and 32 multi-bedroom apartments – are intended for visiting scientists who typically come to Janelia Farm for short-term collaborations.

HHMI has submitted an application with the Loudoun County Industrial Development Authority for up to \$23 million in tax-exempt bonds to finance the apartment building project and related costs.

Opened in 2006 as HHMI’s first freestanding campus, Janelia Farm provides an interdisciplinary research environment for scientists studying how networks of brain cells work together to enable complex behaviors and the development of new technologies for imaging and data analysis. The campus is home to approximately 240 scientists – including 33 laboratory heads who anchor the research program and 100 visiting scientists from 15 countries around the world, as well as post doctoral researchers, and graduate students.

Established in 1993, The Dietze Construction Group has developed into a well-known, well-respected industry leader as a full service general contractor and construction manager with headquarters in Ashburn, Virginia. Dietze’s diverse portfolio includes base building, tenant interior, mission critical environments, hospitality, retail, and multi-family residential construction.

WDG Architecture was founded in 1938 and provides architectural, planning, and interior design services to clients nationally from their offices in Washington, D.C. and Dallas, Texas. WDG is recognized for design excellence and has been the recipient of numerous design awards. WDG’s practice areas include commercial, corporate, hospitality, multi-family residential, retail, educational, and institutional design.